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PENELOPE LIVELY writes stories about the flow of time, the continuity of past and present, and the relation between history and personal memory. Born and raised in Egypt, she came to England at the age of twelve, finding it a cold strange place where she had to learn how the place worked. While writing a history of Levin I read *Spiderweb*, in which her main character sees an English village as if through the eyes of a social anthropologist. It seemed to me an interesting way to look at Levin, Otaki or any other New Zealand town.

The place took shape. It ceased to be a landscape, a backdrop, and became an organism. Stella perceived the intricate system of checks and balances by which things worked. She saw that there was a continuous state of negotiation, of dealing, of to-and-fro arrangements. Everyone stood in a particular relationship to everyone else, often literally so in terms of marriage connections or distant ties of blood. People employed one another, or sold things to each other, or exchanged services, or simply rubbed shoulders. Here there and everywhere each casual encounter in a lane or at a shop entrance reinforced this subtle and elaborate system, as hard to penetrate as any she had met.

These are the links in a community.

In this issue, our twenty-eighth, you can read about many people and their relations to each other, whether by marriage, business, school, or play. Some lived in the past, some have just recently passed on and others, to our satisfaction, are well and truly with us.

Everybody needs their biography told so that they can pass on to their friends and children the gift of a remembered way of living.

The *Journal* does its bit to preserve these memories. Thanks to the indexes created by dedicated members, our *Journal* can help inquirers to find out how, in Otaki, 'everyone stood in a particular relationship to everyone else'.

The Otaki Historical Society Journal is published annually every December by Otaki Historical Society (Inc.). Otaki Historical Society, founded in 1977, is a member of the Federation of New Zealand Historical Societies.

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